

***For Immediate Release***

Wednesday, August 15, 2007

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**‘STILL WAITING’ EXPLORES ROOTS AND RESILIENCE IN A FAMILY OF 150 DISPLACED BY HURRICANE KATRINA**

***Note to Editors:*** To view the trailer for “Still Waiting”, visit <http://www.stillwaiting.colostate.edu/>. For a list of television air dates and stations is available by visiting [www.newsinfo.colostate.edu](http://www.newsinfo.colostate.edu) and clicking on the header of this release.

***FORT COLLINS*** - Poignant stories of Hurricane Katrina's devastation on the South continue to be recounted nearly two years after the storm. A new documentary tells the story of three women who anchor a family of 150 people displaced from St. Bernard Parish, La., illustrating the devastation to bonds of love and African-American Southern culture within a family and a community. The film is a collaborative work of Ginny Martin, two-time Emmy Award winning filmmaker and Kate Browne, specialist in Afro-Creole culture and professor of anthropology at Colorado State University.

"Still Waiting" chronicles how the "emotional ecosystem" of Connie, Katie and Janie's family shows stress under the strain of betrayal first by Mother Nature and then their ensuing struggle with the system set in place to rebuild their community after Katrina.

Filmed between October 2005 and March 2007, the documentary takes place over 18 months of the family's journey after their evacuation to Dallas, Texas, and through their eventual return home - an event both hopeful and heartbreaking -- to the New Orleans area.

Connie, the only family member who had left her roots in southern Louisiana, finds herself hosting more than 150 family members in Dallas who evacuate from Louisiana. In the spirit of family, she manages to find provisions and housing for each of them for months to come. Janie is unable to return to the devastation, and she and her husband turn over what is left of their home to a daughter and remain in Dallas, only to face the additional sadness of living separated from their children.

Eventually, most family members return to the bayou, overjoyed to be home. But their honeymoon is short; without their homes and community, and the assistance they desperately need to rebuild them, their family rituals of cooking, enjoying afternoons on their front porches and large Sunday dinners soon fall apart, despite their best efforts. Their family and community ties fray under the strain of waiting for the help that was promised long ago.

Katie is among the family who return home, but waits six months for a handicapped trailer and 18 months after Katrina still has not received grant money promised through Louisiana's federal-assisted Katrina "Road Home" program to rebuild.

"To me, the heartbreaking irony is that the self-sufficiency practiced by this family for generations positioned them poorly to get help from the institutions that are now controlling so much of their lives," Browne said. "They have no experience speaking bureaucratic language or navigating their mazes. So for the first time in their lives, they are dependent and powerless and forced to wait in a terrible limbo that is seriously wearing them down. "

The family exhibited many of the qualities that made for a good film, said Martin, the film's director.

"I was drawn in by the strength and warmth of their family ties, the richness of the Creole culture, and their deep attachment to place - 'home,'" Martin said. "And now all of this is at stake. We need to pay attention."

The documentary explores the meaning of home and the rituals and place that define a family, the role of faith in resilience, and finally the problems left in what remains of the parish: rebuilding homes and families under newly emerging racial strains and demographic changes and the emotional toll Katrina continues to take.

The entire St. Bernard Parish, including the town of Violet, where much of the family lived, was flooded with 5-12 feet of water immediately following Katrina. About 67,000 people were displaced. Almost completely devastated, rebuilding in the parish continues to be slow and cumbersome.

"Still Waiting" was produced by Browne and Martin and made possible by grants from the National Science Foundation, Colorado State University and Women in Film Foundation. Check [www.stillwaiting.colostate.edu](http://www.stillwaiting.colostate.edu) for listings of local PBS air times and dates or for more information about the film.